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DEPARTMENT OF NURSING EDUCATION

IN CHARGE OF

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This department plans to publish during the coming year a series of articles dealing with practical teaching problems. The following brief outline suggests some of the general standards which can be used by superintendents and teachers to measure the results of their teaching. The succeeding articles will deal with principles and methods of teaching.

I. STANDARDS FOR JUDGING TEACHING

A. What teaching aims to accomplish.

- (1) To train good nurses, that is, to help them to acquire certain specialized kinds of knowledge, power and skill which will enable them to meet their duties and responsibilities efficiently.
- (2) These duties include not only the every-day demands of the hospital during training, but the demands that will come to them in the later practice of nursing. The newer duties which are being placed upon nurses and the widening opportunities of the last few years must be considered, as well as the bedside care of the sick.
- (3) In the last analysis, the test of good nursing is the extent to which the public is helped by it, the degree of success which has been achieved in saving life, preventing sickness and relieving distress. The aim of teaching is to further this end.

B. In judging the quality of teaching, attention should be centered on

- (1) The effects produced in the *pupil* rather than on the efforts of the *teacher*.
- (2) The effects produced in *every day work* on the wards as well as the *class work* and *examination records* of the pupil.
- (3) The *later* growth and progress of the pupils of a school as well as their *present* standing.

C. The following tests or standards of the quality of teaching of any school or system, will cover the essential points to be observed (suggested largely by *Elementary Standards*, Chap. I-IV, McMurry).

(1) Motives of pupils

- (a) This refers to the dominating purposes which govern character and conduct.
- (b) The quality, variety and power of motives are judged by the spirit, habits, interests and activities of the pupil.
- (c) The higher grade of teaching builds on the vital interests and needs of pupils, arouses worthy and serious hopes and ambitions which persist in their future life, and strengthens moral fiber.
- (d) In the lower grade of teaching, some form of coercion is usually depended on to get work done, unworthy and selfish motives are encouraged, or motives are ignored altogether.

(2) Considerations of values by pupils

- (a) This means the ability to appreciate the relative value or worth of ideas, to observe, compare and judge things correctly, to draw rational conclusions.
- (b) Good sense and good judgment in deciding all the practical questions of everyday life are evidence of this power of weighing values, as well as thoughtfulness and reasonableness in responding to questions in the class-room.
- (c) The higher grade of teaching places this kind of *live thinking* above the memorizing of *facts*.
- (d) The lower grade of teaching is content with the mere storage of facts and the acquisition of mechanical skill as ends in themselves.

(3) Organization of ideas by pupils

- (a) This means the ability to systematize knowledge, to grasp the central idea and arrange subordinate ideas in their proper relationship, to classify knowledge in usable systems.
- (b) This is a good test of the completeness and thoroughness of one's grasp of a subject. It is an essential element in effective study. It shows itself in the kind of notes one takes, in the answers to questions, in the method of going to work at a practical task.
- (c) In the higher grade of teaching the *method of arranging* ideas is of as much importance as the *acquisition* of the ideas themselves.
- (d) In the lower grade of teaching, pupils accumulate masses of scrappy, unrelated facts with no power to focus on any special problem, or to find the facts when needed.

(4) Initiative of pupils

- (a) This means the ability to use one's knowledge effectively, to solve new problems and to discover new problems to solve, to pursue independent study.
- (b) Initiative is judged by the amount of self-reliance, resourcefulness and adaptability developed in pupils, by the way in which they apply their theoretical knowledge to practical situations and by their success in working with and leading others.
- (c) The higher grade of teaching encourages pupils to depend on themselves as far as possible, to submit their ideas freely for criticism and discussion and to contribute all they can to the general fund of knowledge. It seeks to stimulate "live-mindedness" and to develop individuality.
- (d) The lower grade of teaching usually substitutes tradition and authority for inquiry and investigation, imposes conventional restraints on the mental activity of pupils and fails to encourage the free expression of individuality.

II. THE TEACHER'S QUALIFICATIONS AND HER PREPARATION

A. Personal qualities which help to make a good teacher

- (1) A sound wholesome character, even disposition and a generous helpful spirit.
- (2) Culture and refinement shown in dignity and courtesy of manner, tasteful dress, correct speech, agreeable voice, and freedom from objectionable mannerisms.
- (3) Friendliness, tact and understanding in dealing with people, combined with a reasonable degree of firmness and decision, and a healthy sense of humor.
- (4) Enthusiasm, vigor and resourcefulness in planning and carrying on one's work, combined with systematic and orderly habits and good "staying" qualities.
- (5) A keen, well-balanced, well-ordered mind, combined with a real love for study and a strong desire to help others to enjoy and profit by the knowledge to be given.

B. Technical or professional experience and training

- (1) Knowledge required.
 - (a) The teacher must have a sound, up-to-date, scientific knowledge of the subjects she or he is to teach. It is impossible to make this exhaustive, but the more authoritative it is, the better, and it should always be well in advance of the class.

- (b) The teacher should be closely in touch with reliable sources of information, and should be constantly supplementing and verifying her knowledge by observation and study.
 - (c) The general teacher, one who covers a fairly wide range of subjects has many advantages, especially for the earlier part of the nursing course, but for the special branches, such as massage, obstetrical nursing, dietetics, etc., specialists are preferred. Where strictly medical subjects are to be treated, physicians should be chosen as teachers, nursing subjects should be handled by nurses, and so on.
- (2) Professional experience and skill
- (a) The teacher should have a wide practical experience in the branches she teaches and should be skillful in handling materials and performing all the necessary manipulations which belong to these branches.
- C. Experience and preparation in teaching
- (1) The professional experience should, if possible, be supplemented by some special training and experience in teaching, such as may be obtained in a good normal school, or an educational department of a university. This is better if it follows the professional training and is applied specifically to the problems of the training school.
 - (2) In the absence of such a preparation, much can be accomplished by the study of good books on teaching, by extension lectures and conferences on this subject and by observation of good teaching methods.

THE HIGH SCHOOL AND THE STUDENT NURSE

BY ANNA C. JAMMÉ

"I am unwilling to recommend our graduates to training schools for nurses because of the low standards of educational requirements in these schools." A high school principal thus expressed himself to the writer a few days ago while in conversation on the subject of how the high school may aid in the preparation of the future student of the training school. Why should such penalization of our training schools exist when the high school should and does stand ready to give to the girl the preparation that is necessary for the training school, when the training school will demand such preparation. The high school is the interest of the community in its function of preparing its graduates for useful citizenship and to give them the preparation for an avocation in that community. The training school for nurses is also the interest

of the community. Therefore, is it not logical that a union of interest and work should exist between the high school and the training school for the benefit of the community?

The studies to be given in the high school for the girl who wishes to enter nursing need not be isolated from the general high school course, nor is it necessary that a special course should be outlined to be followed exclusively as preparation for the training school. A course that may be considered practical and feasible in every high school should present the features of a general science course. This would include the following:

I. English. The aim of this course will be to impart correctness and skill in the use of the English language; instruction in the general principles of composition; in oral expression; to cultivate interest in public questions and an appreciation of good literature.

II. Latin. First year work which would give a knowledge of declensions and conjugations; the acquisition of a reasonable vocabulary as aid in understanding English words derived from Latin which would lead to a more comprehensive understanding and interpretation of medical and anatomical terms.

III. Chemistry. This would be a general survey of the ground of inorganic chemistry and the first principles of organic chemistry. The laboratory has assumed a most important place in modern education. The high school laboratory as a rule affords better opportunity than can be found in the training school for simple experimentation. Household chemistry should be included in the general course or separately, emphasizing those portions of the subject related to the home, as sanitation and ventilation and the applications to the study of nutrition, to food analysis and analysis of waste products of the body. This study should not necessarily be exhaustive, but should be taught in a way that it could be applied to the ordinary phenomena of the every day life of the school girl.

IV. Biology. This study will provide a foundation for the study of anatomy and physiology, also bacteriology. Physiology could follow and include the study of the fundamental structure, function and conduct of the human organism, placing emphasis on hygiene rather than on anatomy. The experimental work in the laboratory could be designed to exert direct influence on the pupil for the betterment of personal hygiene. Field work could show the local control of the public health with reference to food, infection, contagion, etc. Bacteriology may be reserved for the training school or possibly elementary work could be taken in connection with the subjects under physiology.

V. Home economics. The course, as designed in high schools, is primarily to prepare girls to become better home makers which qualification is an essential for successful nursing. The course will include domestic science and home nursing, and in connection will take up the study of food principles, food production, source, composition, preparation for market, effect of heat and cooking, methods of cooking, digestibility and food values. These problems are important in that they affect not only the home maker but enter most intimately into the work of the nurse. Home nursing would include the care of the room, bed making, taking temperature and pulse, bathing a patient in bed and bathing a baby. This should be taught by the school nurse.

VI. Mathematics. Although this deals, in the high school, with exact science, the student has not as yet been trained in mathematics which deals with concrete problems. There should, therefore, be thorough drill and frequent reviews of problems under topics already mentioned and cultivation of the power to think and reason rather than to memorize set formulae.

In addition to the above mentioned subjects which may be considered as necessary requirements for training schools, electives may be recommended as, one foreign language, French or German, and either sociology or psychology or both.

Now how shall this be done? The answer is simple enough. When the girl enters her high school and selects her course she will find in the curriculum the studies leading to nursing. Should she change her mind later nothing is lost and she can go in the direction either of the normal school or college taking her credits on these various subjects which are demanded for entrance both to normal school and college. Should she decide, following her course of training, to take work in a university, these credits will still be of value.

Without any doubt could the students in the high school be given a comprehensive view of what is necessary to study in preparation for nursing, the reasons for such study, and value to them later in their career by assisting their efficiency and increasing their earning power, it would be a means of lessening the exodus from the high school at the end of the second year. When credits for full high school work in the branches named will be offered by the training schools then the connection between the high school and the training school will be cemented, and there will be less reason for the familiar accusation that the training school encourages low education requirements.